



## Epidemiologic Notes & Reports

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### October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

The message of Breast Cancer Awareness Month is that early detection of breast cancer saves lives. The national public education campaign involves many voluntary organizations, professional associations, and governmental agencies (including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). The Breast Cancer Awareness program reaches millions of people across the United States to encourage women to have periodic screening mammograms and annual breast examinations. Women are also urged to perform monthly breast self-examination.

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among U.S. women. In 1998, an estimated 178,800 new cases will be diagnosed and 43,500 women will die from the disease. In Kentucky, it is estimated that 2,900 women will be newly diagnosed with breast cancer and 700 women will die from the disease.<sup>1</sup>

### RISK FACTORS FOR BREAST CANCER

The risk of breast cancer increases as a woman gets older. About 80% of breast cancers occur in women aged 50 and older. Breast cancer risk is increased if other members of the family – relatives on both the maternal and paternal sides – have had breast cancer in any form. Women with previous breast cancer have a three to fourfold increased risk of developing a new cancer in the other breast. Other risk factors include having a first child after 30, or never having children. There is increased risk of diagnosis of breast cancer for affluent women, but an increased mortality rate for those in poverty. Specific factors adding risk for affluent women have not yet been identified, though lifestyle choices are suspected as being influential.<sup>2</sup>

### HOW MANY WOMEN GET MAMMOGRAMS & BREAST EXAMS?

In 1997, 76.9% of Kentucky females over 40 years of age had ever had a mammogram and clinical breast examination (CBE); the national median was 78.8%. For the same time period, 64.8% of Kentucky females aged 50 and older had had a mammogram and CBE in the past 2 years. The national median was 72.3%.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 1. Prevalence of Use by Kentucky and U.S. Women Ages 40 and Older Who Have Ever Received a Mammogram.

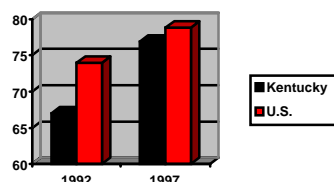
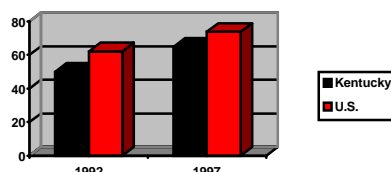


Figure 2. Prevalence of Use by Kentucky and U.S. Women Ages 50 and Older Who Have Received a Mammogram and CBE in the Past 2 Years.



Despite improvement in the past 5 years, Kentucky has not achieved the Year 2000 objectives to increase mammograms and clinical breast examinations for females 40 and older to 90% or to 80% of those females 50 and older who have had a mammogram and CBE in the past 2 years.<sup>4</sup>

### References (see page 4)

**Submitted by:** Karen Asher, Program Coordinator, Kentucky Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, kasher4@mail.state.ky.us or 502-564-3418.

## “Epi” Rapid Response Team – 1998

The “Epi” Rapid Response Team was formed in 1987 to assist with the investigation and control of disease outbreaks in Kentucky. Its membership of trained “responders” now stands at 76 members. New members are added to the roster through participation in a special training course given by the Division of Epidemiology and Health Planning or by conducting an epidemiologic investigation under Division supervision. Except for the 10 state staff, all the members are employed by local health departments. Providers should contact team members in their area if an outbreak or unusual occurrence is suspected.

During the September 1998 annual conference at Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park, 4 members were recognized for their decade of service. Those member are: Rick Molohon, Lloyd Penniston, Anita Tackett and Sarah Wells. Clarkson Palmer, M.D., M.P.H., was presented a Certificate of Appreciation for 8 years of service to the team.

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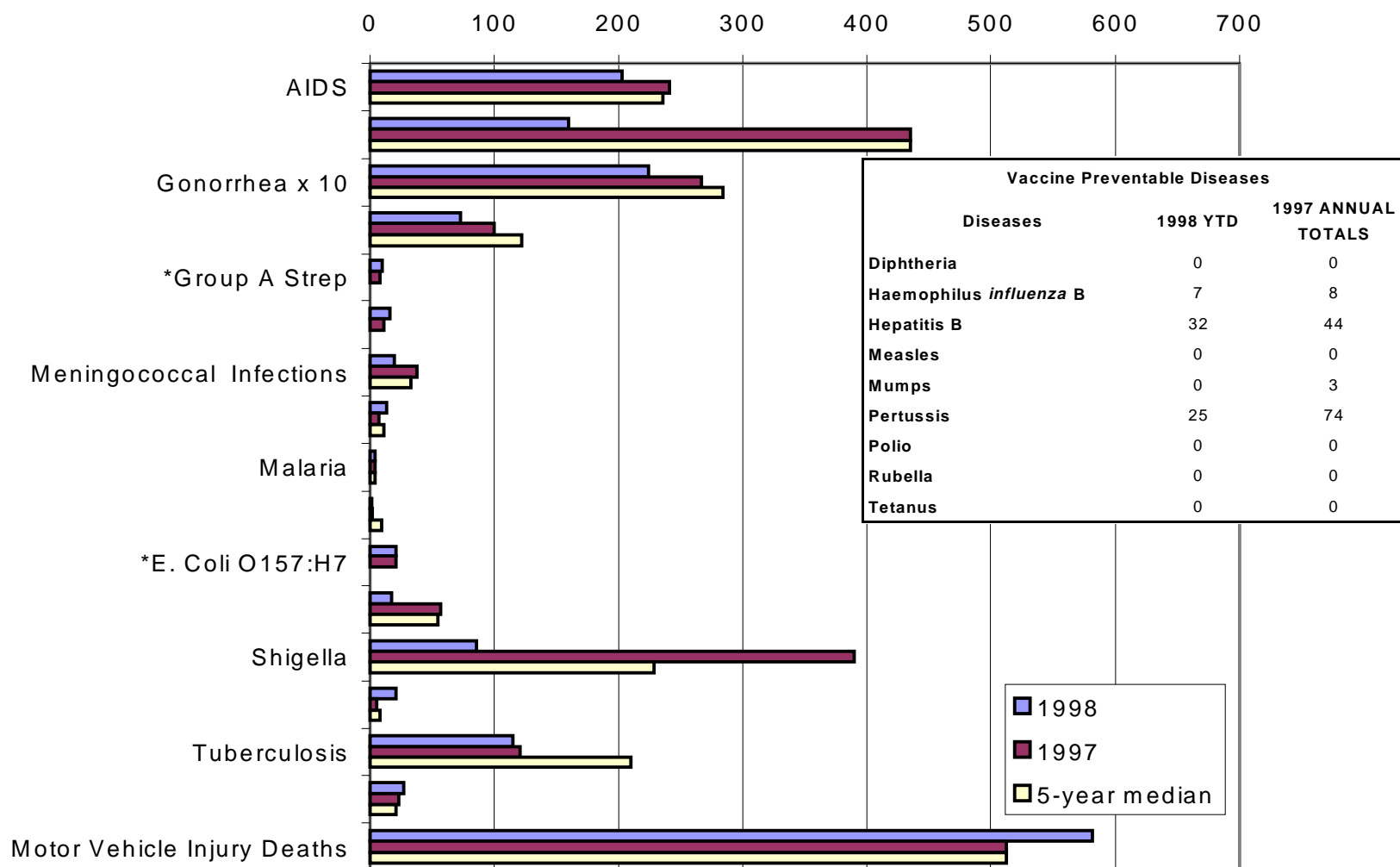
**October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month** (continued from page 1)**REFERENCES**

- <sup>1</sup>Landis SH, Murray T, Bolden S, Wingo PA. Cancer Statistics, 1998. Cancer Journal for Clinicians. 1998; 48: 6-9
- <sup>2</sup>Take no risks with breast cancer. Baptist health net. 1998 Baptist Health Systems of South Florida. 1: [2 screens]. Available at: <http://www.baptisthealth.net/YourHealth/Spotlight/BreastCancer/factors.html>. Accessed September 11, 1998.
- <sup>3</sup>CDC. 1997 Behavioral Risk Factor Survey Surveillance Summary Prevalence Report. Atlanta, GA. US Dept of Health & Human Services, Public Health Service, 1998.
- <sup>4</sup>Kentucky Department for Health Services. Healthy Kentuckians 2000 Mid-Decade Review. 1996; 110.

**Adults Need Immunizations . . .**

Governor Paul Patton has proclaimed October to be Adult Immunization Month in Kentucky. Health care providers are asked to encourage adults, particularly those at increased risk for influenza-related complications, to receive an influenza vaccination. Patients who are 65 years of age or older should also receive a one-time pneumonia vaccine. For additional information contact the Kentucky Immunization Program at 502-564-4478.

**CASES OF SELECTED REPORTABLE DISEASES IN KENTUCKY, YEAR TO DATE, (YTD)  
THROUGH AUGUST 1998**



\*Historical data are not available.

Contributed by: Patricia Beeler, Surveillance & Investigations Branch

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## Reminder . . .

902 KAR 2:020 requires health professionals and licensed health facilities to report notifiable diseases to the local health department serving the jurisdiction in which the patient resides. The local health department reports all pertinent information concerning the case to the Kentucky Department for Public Health, Division of Epidemiology & Health Planning in Frankfort. The state, in turn, submits selected data electronically to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) for entry into the national registry of notifiable diseases. Personal identifiers are stripped from the database before it is sent from Kentucky to the CDC. Any questions about reporting may be directed to Michael Auslander, D.V.M., M.S.P. H., or Pat Beeler, Surveillance & Investigations Branch at (502) 564-3418.